

Brief Comparative Overview of Conway's and MMP's Marsh Bird Survey Protocols

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- 1) Conway's protocols were developed for continental monitoring purposes, MMP currently serves for Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin.
- 2) The MMP is primarily a volunteer participant-based survey; many participants currently using Conway's protocol are agency personnel (e.g., NWR staff). Although either protocol can be used by either volunteers or agency personnel.
- 3) Conway protocol has an initial 5-minute passive period prior to starting call-broadcast; MMP has a passive period at the end of the broadcast period.
- 4) MMP includes only evening surveys; Conway protocol allows participants to choose either morning or evening (or even nighttime under special circumstances) surveys.
- 5) MMP uses 100 meter fixed-radius semi-circle sample area; Conway protocol uses unlimited-radius, full-circle point counts.
- 6) Conway protocol asks observers to estimate distance to every bird detected (participants are asked to not do this at points where doing so might affect ability to record new detections [points with lots of detections]).
- 7) MMP does 2 replicate surveys per year; Conway protocol recommends 3 replicates (although any number is acceptable).
- 8) MMP uses a 10-minute survey duration: 5 minutes of call-broadcast (one minute for each species of interest) followed by 5 minutes of passive listening - same 5 species on call-broadcast sequence for all locations (customized for Great Lakes region). Conway protocol survey duration varies, depending on the suite of species a participant wants to monitor: 5 minutes of passive listening followed by 1 minute for each species of interest (more flexible for continental differences in species assemblages).
- 9) MMP uses >250 m distance between points; Conway protocol recommends 400m (or smaller increments of 400m, such as 200m or 100m in special circumstances).
- 10) Conway protocol has observers record each individual marsh bird detected on a separate line, and record whether each bird was detected during each 1-min sub-segment of the survey.
- 11) Conway protocol asks observers to record the type of call given for each individual detected.
- 12) Conway protocol asks observers to record whether each bird was 1) heard, 2) seen, or 3) heard and seen.
- 13) Both Conway and MMP protocols make provisions for observers to record secondary, non-target secretive marsh bird species (such as passerines that commonly use marshlands).